

### **Acceleration**

The Gifted Program philosophy provides and maintains a program to meet the cognitive and affective needs of gifted and talented students. The District will offer appropriate services, educational opportunities, and differentiated curricula for students who demonstrate high performance capability in specific academic fields or in intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership areas.

One of the District's priorities is to provide rigor and challenge in order to meet individual student needs. Access to appropriate programming will occur equitably throughout the District whenever and wherever it is needed.

Continuous progress acceleration should be the primary vehicle for meeting the needs of the gifted. When multiple criteria indicate exceptional need, acceleration may be considered.

The following types of acceleration are available:

- Continuous Progress
- Early Entrance
- Subject Matter Acceleration
- Whole Grade Acceleration

The superintendent will develop and publish guidelines for implementing this policy.

Any student or parent who believes that an acceleration option has been inappropriately denied may appeal that decision through the appropriate channel, beginning with the school principal and proceeding to the superintendent or designee. The Board of Education serves as the final arbiter of disagreements regarding students' educational program.

Adopted: July 17, 2006  
Revised: September 14, 2009  
Revised: July 18, 2016

## DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Implementation Guidelines Board Policy 6204: Acceleration

Among the programming options available for highly capable students within the Dubuque Community School District, a number involve acceleration in one form or another. These acceleration options include:

- Continuous Progress at Grade Level  
In continuous progress acceleration, students who can demonstrate mastery of grade level curriculum are allowed to work with alternate materials and activities which more appropriately meet their instructional needs. Schools are encouraged to use clustering with grade level gifted students to facilitate the use of this model. Continuous progress acceleration is the primary vehicle for meeting the needs of gifted students in the district.
- Early Entrance  
Students may enter first grade, middle school, high school, and college earlier than expected. Early entrance is an acceleration option for exceptionally able students. The district will use the *Iowa Acceleration Scale* to help guide the school team and parents in making early entrance decisions in grades K-8.
- Subject Matter Acceleration  
Subject matter acceleration occurs when a student is placed for a part of the day with students at more advanced grade levels for instruction in one or more subject areas without being assigned to the higher grade level.
- Whole Grade Acceleration  
When other programming opportunities are insufficient to meet the instructional needs of exceptionally able students, whole grade acceleration, or movement ahead of regular grade placement, will be considered. Decisions regarding whole grade acceleration will be made in accordance with district administrative guidelines and must be governed by the best interests of the child.

The following pages describe specific requirements and processes for the above options. These requirements and processes will be reviewed annually by district staff. It is the intent of the district to provide all students with rigorous instruction. The following guidelines outline the data that will be utilized to inform our discussion about the proper placement of a student; however, if a student meets a majority of the measurements, and parent/guardian input is such that they believe that their student possesses the motivation, work ethic and desire to be successful in an accelerated program, the student will be given an opportunity to be placed in that program. Any proposed changes will be presented to the superintendent by May 1 and, if approved, take effect for the following school year.

## Continuous Progress in K-5 Reading

### Description

Students who demonstrate advanced ability in reading will receive differentiated content and instruction.

### Process

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator and reading specialist, will select from the following options:

- Placement in a cluster group
- Guided reading
- Alternate Reading Curriculum

### Qualities and Considerations of Possible Candidates

- Multiple data indicating reading level at least **two grade levels above** current grade placement
- Upper 5% standardized testing data
- Portfolio documents
- Recommendations from previous teacher(s)
- Parent/guardian input and support

## **Continuous Progress in K-5 Math**

### **Description**

Students who demonstrate advanced ability in math will receive differentiated content and instruction within their grade level.

### **Process**

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator, will select from the following options:

- placement in a cluster group
- flexible grouping within the classroom
- consistent, documented use of the extensions
- participation in Math Club

### **Qualities of Possible Candidates**

- Upper 5-10% standardized testing data
- Portfolio documents
- Consistent, documented performance that exceeds grade level expectations on extensions
- Parent/guardian input and support

## **Continuous Progress in K-5 Fine Arts, Science, and Social Studies**

### **Description**

Students who demonstrate advanced ability in fine arts, science, math, and social studies will receive differentiated content and instruction within their grade level.

### **Process**

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator, will select from the following options:

- placement in a cluster group
- placement in a high interest group
- curriculum modification
- contracting/independent study
- compacting and enrichment
- research into more indepth content

### **Qualities of Possible Candidates**

- Musical acuity
- Artistic talent
- Upper 5-10% standardized testing data
- Portfolio documents
- Recommendations from previous teacher(s)
- Parent/guardian input and support

**Continuous Progress in 6-8**  
**Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Fine Arts, Social Studies, and World Languages**

**Description**

Students who demonstrate advanced ability in language arts, math, science, fine arts, social studies and world languages will receive differentiated content and instruction within their grade level.

**Process**

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator, will select from the following options:

- placement in a cluster group
- placement in an honors class
- placement in a specialized performance group
- alternative curriculum
- curriculum modification
- contracting/ independent study
- compacting and enrichment
- research into more in-depth content

**Qualities and Considerations of Possible Candidates**

- Completed prerequisite coursework
- Musical acuity
- Upper 5-10% standardized testing data
- Portfolio documents
- Recommendations from previous teacher(s)
- Parent/guardian input and support

**Continuous Progress in 9-12**  
**Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Fine Arts, Social Studies, and World Languages**

**Description**

Students who demonstrate advanced ability in language arts, math, science, fine arts, social studies, and world languages will receive differentiated content and instruction.

**Process**

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator and/or Guidance Counselor, will select from the following options:

- waive prerequisite coursework
- alternative curriculum
- placement in an honors class
- placement in a specialized performance group
- AP and/or Post Secondary classes
- curriculum modification
- contracting/independent study
- compacting and enrichment
- research into more in-depth content

**Qualities of Possible Candidates**

- Completed prerequisite coursework
- Musical acuity
- Upper 5-10% standardized testing data
- Portfolio documents
- Recommendations from previous teacher(s)
- Parent/guardian input and support

## **Continuous Progress through Advanced Placement AP Courses**

### **Description**

Advanced Placement (AP) courses are first year college courses offered in high school. The national AP exams offer students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school.

### **Process**

It is recommended that interested students in grades 8-12 confer with the GT Facilitator, AP Instructor(s) and/or Guidance Counselor prior to registration. This team will help students determine if an AP course is an appropriate academic opportunity.

### **Qualities and Considerations of Possible Candidates**

- Demonstrated subject area knowledge
- Completed prerequisite coursework
- Upper 5% standardized testing data
- Portfolio documents
- Recommendations from previous teacher(s)
- Parent/guardian input and support

## **Early Entrance to First Grade**

### **Description**

Early entrance to kindergarten is not allowable under Iowa Code, which sets a minimum age by which students may enter school. The Iowa Code reads, “No child shall be admitted to first grade unless the child is six years of age or has demonstrated the possession of sufficient ability to profit by first grade work on the basis of tests or other means of evaluation.”

### **Process**

The standards and procedures of the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) for possible whole-grade acceleration will be followed.

### **Qualities and Considerations of Possible Candidates**

- highly advanced conceptual skills
- highly advanced academic skills
- social maturity
- parent/guardian input and support

## **Early Entrance to Middle and High School**

### **Description**

Early entrance to middle and high school is an acceleration option for exceptionally able students.

### **Process**

The standards and procedures of the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) for possible whole-grade acceleration will be followed.

All efforts should be made to have this process completed by February. This time line would provide opportunities to transition these students into middle and high school.

### **Qualities and Considerations of Possible Candidates**

- Completed prerequisite coursework
- Upper 5% standardized testing data
- Portfolio documents
- Recommendations from previous teacher(s)
- Parent/guardian input and support
- Student input and support

## **Early Entrance to College**

### **Description**

Students who have completed Dubuque Community School District graduation requirements may be eligible for enrollment in college.

### **Process**

Students meet with the Guidance Counselor to fill out early graduation forms, preferably the semester before the early graduation date.

These forms will also need to be signed by parents/guardians and returned to the Guidance Counselor for the Assistant Principal's approval.

These forms then get filed in the main office.

### **Qualities and Considerations of Possible Candidates**

- Completed graduation requirements
- Counselor input and support
- Parent/guardian input and support

## **Subject Matter Acceleration K-12 Math**

### **Description**

Students who demonstrate exceptional advanced ability in mathematics may be subject-accelerated. Multiple criteria are used to identify these students whose needs cannot be met in the grade level mathematics classroom.

### **Process**

The classroom teacher, with support from the GT facilitator, will use multiple criteria to determine eligibility for possible acceleration.

The identification process begins with classroom performance and results from multiple content criteria. CogAT, ITBS, and MAP testing results are analyzed. If criteria are met, a standardized content area assessment (two or more grade levels above student's current placement) is administered.

Once all testing is complete and the student qualifies for math acceleration, a team will meet to share data and discuss programming options. The team may include the following members:

- Parents/Guardians
- Principal
- GT Facilitator
- Present Teacher
- Receiving Teacher
- Counselor(s)
- GT District Consultant
- District Math Supervisor

### **Essential Criteria for Candidates**

- 132-150 CogAT/WISC
- 95%ile grade level ITBS
- 95%ile MAP
- 75%ile above grade level testing
- Student and parent/guardian input and support

## **Whole Grade Acceleration**

### **Description**

A small number of exceptionally able students have instructional needs that cannot be met in the grade-level classroom. When this occurs, whole-grade acceleration, or movement ahead of normal grade placement, is an option.

### **Process**

A request for whole-grade acceleration may originate with the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher(s), counselor(s), Gifted & Talented (GT) facilitator, Gifted & Talented District Consultant, and/or principal. It is the responsibility of the GT facilitator to coordinate home/school communication and to initiate the following steps.

2. Inform the present school team of the request.
  - Principal
  - Present Teachers
  - Counselor(s)
  - GT District Consultant
3. Meet as a team to share data about the student being considered.
4. Meet with parents/guardians to discuss this possible programming option and outline process. Share latest research on acceleration.
5. After parents/guardians have read the information and if they wish to proceed, schedule the administration of the individual IQ test, achievement, and aptitude testing.
6. Once all testing is completed, gather the following expanded team to complete and interpret the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS):
  - Parents/Guardians
  - Principal
  - GT Facilitator
  - Present Teachers
  - Receiving Teachers
  - Counselor(s)
  - GT District Consultant
7. If whole-grade acceleration is approved, the team should plan the following:
  - Implementation of the plan
  - Transitioning
  - Follow-up staffing within 8 weeks of whole-grade acceleration
  - Monitoring and counseling support
8. If whole-grade acceleration is not approved or chosen by the student/parents/guardians, alternative accommodations should be planned. Options might include:
  - Single subject acceleration
  - Curriculum compacting
  - Opportunities for independent study in areas of interest

### **Qualities and Considerations of Possible Candidates**

- 46-80 total points on the Iowa Acceleration Scale
- Parent/Guardian and student support